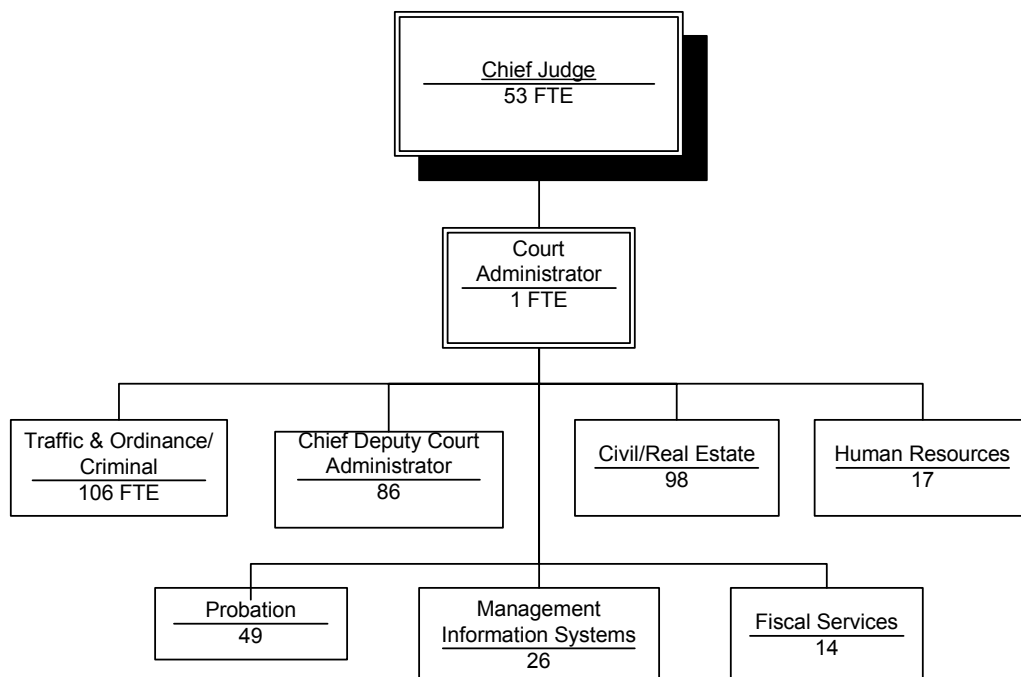


# 36<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT



## **36<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT COURT**

### **AGENCY MISSION**

The mission of the 36<sup>th</sup> District Court is to administer justice with fairness, equality and integrity, resolve matters before the court in a timely manner with trained and motivated staff, and provide courteous and prompt service in a manner that inspires public trust and confidence.

### **CURRENT FACILITIES**

The 36<sup>th</sup> District Court is a limited jurisdiction court serving the City of Detroit. The Court has exclusive jurisdiction in all litigation up to \$25,000 and handles small claims and landlord/tenant proceedings. Criminal jurisdiction includes all misdemeanor criminal offenses and preliminary examination of felony offenses. Annual case filings exceed 500,000, the majority of which are handled in the Traffic Ordinance Division.

The 36<sup>th</sup> District Court is located at 421 Madison Avenue, at the corner of Brush Street. The building, which is privately owned and leased to the City of Detroit, is a converted J.L. Hudson warehouse. The 36<sup>th</sup> District Court is the largest District Court in Michigan and one of the largest in the country. More than 7,500 citizens per day come to the court to conduct business. Five of the six floors in the building are used for Court Operations.

The Traffic Ordinance Division occupies the majority of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. There are 13 teller windows where citizens may pay traffic tickets and other fines, file motions, post bonds, schedule court dates and attend to similar matters. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor is primarily occupied by the Civil/Real Estate Division. There are 8 teller windows on this floor where citizens can make payments and file small claims and landlord/tenant actions.

There are 32 courtrooms in the building, with administrative functions located on the fifth floor. The Procurement and Probation Departments are located on the third floor. The sixth floor is used for storage.

The court moved its operations to the building in 1985. Lack of adequate space is a major concern of the court. With the high volume of daily traffic, offices, courtrooms and hallways are consistently over crowded. Dockets are so large that the defendant must wait in the hall until they are called for trial. In addition, there is a lack of space for Probation Counseling, and very little meeting space.

### **FIVE-YEAR HISTORY**

Nearly all of the building improvements were completed in the mid 1980's in conjunction with the conversion from a warehouse to a courthouse. In early 2001, there was a renovation of the lobby and the cashier's area was remodeled to lower the counters and add Plexiglas panels. In 2003 major renovations were completed on the existing elevators. The improvements included the addition of a new elevator, plus repair of the existing four cars. The city has appropriated \$500,000 for this project.

There are discussions underway with Ford Field to construct a Promenade or an underground parking garage for the Judges adjacent to the building. This will allow the streets to be free from parked vehicles in front of the court building (on both sides of the street). In addition, there are plans to relocate the two air intakes from the corners of the courthouse to the roof. Both of these improvements are in compliance with the September 11, safety based recommendations. Neither of these projects are part of the court's Capital Agenda. The Court has been requested to

## **36<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT COURT**

place two Magistrates and their administrative staff in the proposed Public Safety Mall. No decision has been made regarding the matter. The City of Detroit also may have plans to build a Court Tower sometime in the future. There is a possibility that those plans may include the 36<sup>th</sup> District Court.

### **PROPOSED FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN**

The proposed capital program provides for renovations and improvements to the Madison Center will help to resolve the space problems, provide additional safety features and make improvements to the buildings appearance reflective of the new construction in the immediate vicinity.

#### **Mechanical System Revisions**

Air quality has been a long-standing problem at the 36<sup>th</sup> District Court. Because the air intake vents are located just above the first floor, exhaust and other odors frequently enter and permeate the building. This also creates a security risk for the Court employees and citizens who frequent the building. As the vents are so accessible, chemicals could easily be disbursed throughout the building. Changes in the mechanical system would move these vents to the roof, and create a continuous air flow throughout the building.

#### **Seventh Floor Courtrooms and Chambers**

The 6<sup>th</sup> floor ceiling at the Madison Center is 21.3 feet high. This will permit the addition of a new seventh floor with no requirement to raise the existing roof. Each floor in the building consists of approximately 40,000 square feet. An additional new 10 courtrooms and Judges Chambers can be constructed on approximately 2/3 of the new space. This

will increase the number of courtrooms to 42 and allow each Judge and Magistrate to have a designated courtroom. In addition, the project will require an additional elevator and extension of existing elevators to the seventh floor.

#### **Expansion of Probation Area**

The Probation Division is currently located on the third floor. Serious overcrowding conditions exist in that area. Cubicles are small, and many counseling sessions being partially held in the aisle way. This plan proposes using the remaining space on the new 7<sup>th</sup> floor to house the Probation Division. Forty cubicles will be constructed as Probation counseling offices, with additional common space for key family members and others.

#### **Secure Rooms**

At least one secure room will be constructed on each floor. These rooms will be used for victims, family members and witnesses. Currently, due to space limitations, these citizens must wait in the hall or the courtroom.

#### **Sixth Floor Improvements**

Currently the sixth floor is used for storage. The addition of the seventh floor will necessitate improvements to existing heating systems and electrical upgrades. This will permit a better utilization of the space, and provide some additional room for expansion.

#### **Stair Renovations**

Due to the high volume of traffic in the court, use of the existing stairwells would provide an additional means accessing courtrooms. In addition, the stairwells need to be extended to the new seventh floor.

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### **CAPITAL RELATIONSHIPS: INTERDEPARTMENTAL AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

The Court has no inter-departmental capital relationships with any city agencies.

### **GOALS FOR CAPITAL PROGRAM**

1. To make greater use of the building's square footage to increase courtroom and administrative space.
2. To make the facility more accessible and secure for visitors.
3. To revitalize the appearance of our aging facility.
4. To allow litigants to be advised of which courtroom to go to prior to their arrival at the Court.
5. To provide each Judge and Magistrate with a specific courtroom. Thereby avoiding the daily rotation and confusing logistical issues that the court and litigants adversely experience.

### **RATIONALE FOR CAPITAL PROGRAM**

Since the 36<sup>th</sup> District Court moved into this facility in 1985, the volume of cases has increased dramatically. The current facility does not allow each Judge and Magistrate to have permanently assigned courtrooms. This creates significant scheduling problems for the Court Administration, and considerable confusion for the Court's customers. Expansion of the building to include additional courtrooms on the new seventh floor would help the Court in fulfillment of its mission to resolve matters before the Court in a timely manner.

The additional space for Probation and witness rooms would provide for better service of customers, and aid in inspiring public trust and confidence.

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### **Mechanical System Revisions**

Changes in the mechanical system would move air intakes vent to the roof, and create a continuous airflow throughout the building.

\$ 1,443,000 Unprogrammed

### **Seventh Floor Courtrooms, Chambers and Probation**

This project calls for the construction of a seventh floor and ceiling within the existing 2.13 feet high sixth floor. Ten additional courtrooms will be constructed and will be accessible from the public corridor running diagonally across the building. 10 suites to be used for the Judges chambers will occupy the south-east corner of the building. These rooms will only be accessible from a secure corridor between the chambers and the courtrooms. The north-west corner of the building will house 41 new cubicles with a public waiting area and conference rooms. This area shall be accessible from the public corridor.

\$ 7,200,000 Unprogrammed

### **Extending Elevator to Seventh Floor**

Extension of current bank of elevators to seventh floor is necessary to provide access to the public. The additional elevator is necessary due to the increased amount of traffic in the building.

\$ 700,000 Unprogrammed

### **Sixth Floor Heating, Air Conditioning and Lighting**

These improvements are necessary due to construction of the seventh floor.

\$ 300,000 Unprogrammed

### **Addition of Victims/Witness/Family Rooms on each Trial Court Floor**

Rooms will provide privacy to litigants and their attorneys, and secure areas for witnesses and families of victims. Currently hallways on each floor are used for this purpose.

\$ 9,000 Unprogrammed

### **Renovation of Judges Stairs**

Additional access to seventh floor is required for safety purposes.

\$ 200,000 Unprogrammed

**City of Detroit**  
**Proposed Capital Agenda**  
**FY 2005-06 through 2009-10**

**36th District Court**

	<i>Project Status</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Impact on Budget</i>	<i>Impact on Staffing</i>	<i>Impact on Budget</i>	<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Auth. Unissued</i>	<i>Budget 2004-05</i>	<i>2005-06</i>	<i>2006-07</i>	<i>2007-08</i>	<i>2008-09</i>	<i>2009-10</i>	<i>Un- Program</i>	<i>Rec. 5-Year Plan Total</i>
Mechanical System Revisions	N	P	NOI	NSI		G.O.								\$1,443	\$0
Seventh Floor Courtrooms, Chambers and Probation	N	P	NOI	NSI		G.O.								\$7,200	\$0
Extending Elevator to Seventh Floor	N	P	NOI	NSI		G.O.								\$700	\$0
Sixth Floor HVAC	N	P	NOI	NSI		G.O.								\$300	\$0
Addition of Victims/Witness/ Family Rooms on each Trial Court Floor	N	P	NOI	NSI		G.O.								\$9	\$0
Renovation of Judges' Stairs	N	P	NOI	NSI		G.O.								\$200	\$0
<b>Total by Funding Source</b>							<i>Auth Unissued</i>	<i>Budget 2004-05</i>	<i>2005-06</i>	<i>2006-07</i>	<i>2007-08</i>	<i>2008-09</i>	<i>2009-10</i>	<i>Un- Program</i>	<i>5-Year Total</i>
G.O.							\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9,852	\$0
<b>Total by Agency: 36th District Court</b>								<i>Budget 2004-05</i>	<i>2005-06</i>	<i>2006-07</i>	<i>2007-08</i>	<i>2008-09</i>	<i>2009-10</i>	<i>Un- Program</i>	<i>Grand Total</i>
								\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9,852	\$9,852

*Project Status: M=project is maintaining current infrastructure; N=project will result in new development*  
*Project Timeline: P=project is proposed; O=project is ongoing; U=project is one time and underway*  
*Impact on Operating Budget: AF=additional funding is required; RF=results in reduction of funding; NOI=no operating impact*  
*Impact on Staffing Budget: AS=additional staffing is required; RS=results in reduction of staffing; NSI=no staffing impact*  
*Impact on Operating Budget \$: annual additional funding or (reduction of funding) to operating budget*